Strange and wonderful

ACCOUNT

Of a moſt Barbarous and Bloody

MURTHER,

Committed by five notorious Villains, on *Tueſday* the 11th of this inſtant *May* about ten at night, in a widdow-womans houſe at *Grays* in *Eſſex*, where entring, they Robb'd the houſe and Murthered all the family except the woman her ſelf, who eſcaped their Cruelty by getting out at the backdore, with the manner of their being purſued croſs the water, to the Halfway-Tree, near *Earif*.

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SO frequent are the bloody Murthers, Villanies, Attempts and Cruelties perpetrated, that few weeks expire without ſome barbarous exploit or diſmal Trajedy Fate hovers round this Earthly Ball, and on ſecurer Mortals lays his dreadful hand, cruſhing them untimely deaths and moſt prodigious ſlaughters, Hells envious power ſtill thirſts for Blood, and prompts on deſperate Wretches to engage in all the direſt Cruelties his Mallice can be capable of, forming Horrors and deſtruction ſits upon his Brows, which he infuſes into deſperate Villans, thereby to make them fierce; and much delight in Slaughter, ſo that when he has prompted them on to paſs the bounds of all humanity, nought but Death can glut their furious Rage, and when they have committed any vile Deſign, as Robberies or ſuch notorious outrages, to ſtifle which, or keep it cloſe from being known abroad, Fear ſo begets a thought of making all ſecure, that many times one Villany is augmented with a greater Crime; endeavouring to lay that ſilent thereby, when moſt commonly their blind Revenge and barbarous Deeds miſtake their purpoſed End and only make Heavens dreadful Juſtice fall more dreadful on their Gailty Heads, for blood of Innocents cries loud to that

great God who ſees what e're is done. But amorg all the barbarities and inhumane Cruelties that have of late been Acted, this of which we now ſhall give the Reader an Account of, may be Characteriſed in Rubrick and bear the Crimſon ſtains unto poſterity, for ſure it is, no Villains hands theſe many Months have been dyed ſo deep in blood, the Relation of which take as followeth, on *Tueſday* the 11th of this inſtant, five fellows in Seamens habit were obſerved to lie lurking about a Village called *Grays* near *Rumpford* in *Eſſex*, and curiouſly to eye as they paſſed and repaſſed the houſe to wh ch this Trajeck Fate bete', but there being many Ships lying in the River, near adjoyning to the place aforeſaid, they were thought Seamen indeed, that belonged to ſome of thoſe Veſſels; ſo that they were not much ſcrupled nor at all queſtioned; but as the Scripture well denotes, they having marked out the houſe they intended in the day time, that when night came they might break through and ſteal, *&c.* about ten of the Clock in the Evening aforeſaid, they beſet the houſe wherein they committed this Murther and Robbery it being a houſe diſtant from Neighbours and near adjoyning to the water ſide, about the hour aforementioned, they being aſſured that all the Family were within, began on the backſide of it, to force an entry with ſuch Iron impliments as they had brought for that pernicious Uſe, whereupon the Maid of the houſe hearing a noiſe ſtarted up to ſee what the matter was, not dreaming that her Life was ſo near to an end; but before ſhe could well look about her they had forced a wide paſſage through the Wall, and with Swords and other weapons three of them had entered; ſo that unlocking the dore for the reſt, they altogether ruſhed forwards and one of them ſeiſed the Maid, whileſt the others went to ſecure the reſt of the Family, which according to Report conſiſted of only the Miſtreſs of the houſe, her Daughter about ſixteen or ſeuenteen years of Age, and the Servant-Maid; ſo that after breaking open ſeveral Dores in the houſe, they at laſt came where the Daughter was in Bed, who at their Approach, being as it is ſuppoſed much ſurpriſed, ſhreamed out, which her Mother hearing, and nnderſtanding there were Thieves in the houſe got as it is reported, out at a back dore or window undiſcovered, and went to raiſe the Town, but they having made a privy ſearch and miſſing her, ſuppoſed ſhe had eſcaped their hands, being ſure ſhe was in the houſe when they firſt entred; ſo that fearing to ſtay

long

long l ſt they ſhou'd be ſurprized, they broke open the Trunks and Cheſts, and ſo getting what monies and Goods they could conveniently carry, yet not contented with the Plunder, but as thirſty of Blood as Wealth, Hell ſcrewed them up to greater Villanies and not willing to depart before they left a laſting ſtain of their Diabolick Cruelties they went as it is ſuppoſed where they had left the two females bound, and with impious hands bereaved them of their Lives by giving them ſeveral mortal wounds, whether they acted this Barbarity to ſecure themſelves from a diſcovery, by Reaſon the Maids might know them or whether their guilty Conſciences ſuggeſted any ſuch thing is not certain, becauſe they left none alive that could reſolve the Cauſe, but ſure it is, they ſtayed not long in the houſe after the exploit, but taking a *Boat*, which as it is ſuppoſed, they had brought with them, they with all ſpeed croſſed the River of Thames, and landed near a place called the half-way Tree near *Earif* in *Kent*; but made not ſo much haſt but that they were purſued, yet the purſuers nor being ſtrong enough to encounter with them, they durſt not venture to take them, leſt their bloody hands ſhould have diſpatched them too, rather than to have been taken and committed into the hands of juſtice to be puniſhed for their deſerved Crimes, whereupon they made their eſcape into the next Wood, but great ſearch has been ſince made for them throughout the Country, but as yet none of them can be heard of. 'Tis thought they made for *London* with all ſpeed, for they did not carry away any thing that was weighty or cumberſome thereby to hinder their Flight; when the Mother returned rejoycing that ſhe had by the Aſſiſtance of her Neighbours put the Villains to flight, not dreaming of the barbarous exploits of Murther they had done; but entring to her great Amazement and unſpeakable Grief found her Daughter and Maid-ſervant weltering in their Blood; expanded in Deaths cold Convulſions on the floore; at which falling in a ſwoon hardly to be recovered, but when recovered ſhe bathed in Tears; wiſhed ſhe had been there to have dyed with them, and ſo continued comfortleſs.

And well may the horrors of an afflicted Parent be conceived in ſuch an extream cauſe, for who can reflect upon maternal ſorrow and not be ſenſible of the prevailing Anguiſh that in the like caſe afflicts a wounded Soul, and not condole ſuch great diſtreſs to have a tender offspring murthered by the hands of bloody Villains

lains, and pay back Natures Debt without a ſummons of deliberation hurried unto Eternity, by ſuch untimely Fate; as likewiſe a faithful Servants loſs might in ſome meaſure bear a part, but Murders though cloaked with darkneſs, and in ſecret laid, will not lie buried in Oblivion, for various ways does the Almighty find to make diſcovery, and bring to light the horror of ſuch deeds; nay the trembling Murtherer grows pale with fear, and oft betrays himſelf, when unaccus'd by Men. This Tragecal Scene Acted by the Cruelties of Villains, may be a warning to all to be well Guarded and prepared againſt ſuch dangerous attempts; for if ever wickedneſs abounded to the ſuparlative degree, it may be ſaid it is now compleated; that Monſters in humane ſhapes ſhould dare thus to contemn and violate the Laws of God and Man, to pull down Vengeance on their heads by cauſeleſly ſhedding innocent Blood, for certain it is, that Divine Juſtice will not ever ſleep, but early or late bring them to ſuffer the deſerved puniſhment for ſuch notorious Crimes.

FINIS.